

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 EUR-08 ISO-00 AID-01 SS-07 NSC-06
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FM AMEMBASSY BAMA KO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6190
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY BANJUL
AMEMBASSY BISSAU
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMA KO 1516

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, ML, OREP (CODEL DIGGS)

SUBJ: CODEL DIGGS CALL ON ACTING CHIEF OF STATE

1. SUMMARY: CHARIMAN DIGGS AND CONGRESSMEN SOLARZ
AND WHALEN, ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR, DCM, AND CDO,
CALLED APRIL 12 ON ACTING CHIEF OF STATE LT COL
FILIFING SISSOKO (PERMANENT SECRETARY, MILITARY COMMITTEE
OF NATIONAL LIBERATION), WHO REPLIED TO
QUESTIONS ON PODGORNÝ AND CASTRO VISITS TO AFRICA,
SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AFRICA, UNION DEMOCRATIQUE DU
PEUPLE MALIEN (UDPM), SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM,
MALIAN DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES, AND U.S. AID TO ZAIRE.
END SUMMARY.

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2. SISSOKO REGRETTED ABSENCE OF CHIEF OF STATE,
PRESIDENT MOUSSA TRAORE, WHO HAD MET CHAIRMAN DIGGS
PREVIOUSLY AND WHO HELD HIM IN HIGH REGARD. CHAIRMAN
EXPLAINED PURPOSE OF HIS VISIT AND BROAD INTERESTS
HIS SUBCOMMITTEE HAD IN CONNECTION POLITICAL,
ECONOMIC, AND AID POLICIES OF THE UNITED STATES WITH
RESPECT TO AFRICA.

3. CHAIRMAN THEN ASKED SISSOKO HOW MALI VIEWED RECENT PODGORNÝ AND CASTRO VISITS TO AFRICA, EXPLAINING THAT OTHER FRANCOPHONE COUNTRIES THAT DELEGATION HAD RECENTLY VISITED HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER SOVIET ACTIONS IN AFRICA. SOME OF THESE COUNTRIES HAD REQUESTED U.S. MILITARY AID, CITING SOVIET MOVES IN AFRICA AS THREAT TO PEACE AND STABILITY. WAS THIS THREAT PERCEPTION JUSTIFIED, ASKED CHAIRMAN.

4. SISSOKO SAID PODGORNÝ VISIT TO AFRICA RAISED NO QUESTIONS FOR MALI. PODGORNÝ HAD BEEN INVITED BY AFRICAN COUNTRIES WITHIN CONTEXT OF THEIR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH USSR. RECENT VISIT OF FRENCH PRESIDENT TO MALI HAD GIVEN RISE TO NO QUESTIONS OUTSIDE CONTEXT OF FRANCO-MALIAN RELATIONS, AND PODGORNÝ'S VISIT WAS NO DIFFERENT. SISSOKO SAW NO REASON TO FEAR PODGORNÝ VISIT TO AFRICA.

5. CHAIRMAN SAID MALI WAS FIRST COUNTRY IN AFRICA THAT DELEGATION HAD VISITED WHICH DID NOT INITIATE DISCUSSION ON PERCEIVED THREAT OF SOVIET INFLUENCE. HOW DID SISSOKO VIEW DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MALI AND OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN PERCEPTIONS OF SOVIET UNION? SISSOKO SAID FEELING OF FEAR DEPENDED ON EACH COUNTRY'S PERCEPTION AND ITS POSITION IN REGARD TO USSR. MALI WAS NON-ALIGNED AND SAW THE SITUATION OBJECTIVELY. MALI HAD FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION, SAID SISSOKO, AND HE CERTAINLY HOPED
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NOBODY WOULD CRITICIZE MALI IF PODGORNÝ PAID A VISIT. PRESIDENT MOUSSA TRAORE VISITED MOSCOW LAST YEAR AND HAD, IN FACT, INVITED PODGORNÝ TO COME TO BAMA KO.

6. CONGRESSMAN WHALEN NOTED THAT MALI WAS IN PROCESS OF FORMING A POLITICAL PARTY. WAS ELECTION OF A CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT LIKELY IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE? SISSOKO EXPLAINED THAT CONSTITUTION OF JUNE 1974 PROVIDED FOR FIVE-YEAR TRANSITION PERIOD FOR RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE. BY JUNE 1979 PROCESS WOULD BE COMPLETED.

7. CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ NOTED THAT U.S. CONGRESS WAS CONSIDERING INITIAL APPROPRIATION OF \$200 MILLION FOR THE SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, EVENTUAL SIZE OF WHICH COULD REACH \$1.5 TO \$2 BILLION. WHAT WERE MALI'S DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES? WHAT SPECIAL ROLE WAS THERE FOR THE UNITED STATES? SISSOKO SAID CILSS (INTER-STATE SAHEL DROUGHT COMMITTEE) HAD ESTABLISHED OVER-ALL PRIORITIES FOR REGION. MALI'S FIVE-YEAR

PLAN GAVE FIRST PRIORITY TO AGRICULTURE AND LIVE-STOCK, IN ADDITION TO CONTROL OF WATER RESOURCES. MALIAN GOVERNMENT WAS VERY PLEASED WITH SIGNIFICANT AND EFFECTIVE AID GIVEN BY UNITED STATES. DURING DROUGHT, U.S. AIRLIFT HAD BEEN SPECTACULAR. MALI HAD GREAT EXPECTATIONS OF ROLE UNITED STATES WOULD PLAY IN MALIAN DEVELOPMENT.

8. CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ ASKED HOW MALI WOULD REGARD SHIPMENT OF U.S. ARMS TO ZAIRE. SISSOKO SAID ZAIRE WAS SOVERIGN STATE AND HAD RIGHT TO REQUEST SUCH AID. MALI HAD NO COMMENT, AS MALI WOULD NOT APPRECIATE COMMENTS MADE BY OTHERS ON AGREEMENTS MALI MIGHT MAKE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. SISSOKO PAUSED AND THEN WENT ON TO ADD THAT, OF COURSE, ALL AFRICANS WERE CONCERNED BY EVENTS SUCH AS WERE TAKING PLACE IN ZAIRE. IN CONTEXT OF GOOD US-MALIAN RELATIONS,
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HE WOULD GIVE AN OPINION: SHABA HAD LONG BEEN SCENE OF CONFLICT. SOME REGARDED PRESENT PROBLEM AS AN INTERNAL MATTER; OTHERS AS AN INVASION. NOBODY YET, HOWEVER, HAD PROVED IT WAS AN INVASION. AS AN AFRICAN, HE HOPED SHABA WOULD BE CONSIDERED AN INTERNAL AFFAIR. MALI, HOWEVER, WOULD NOT BE CRITICAL IF MOBUTU ASKED FOR US MILITARY AID; PERHAPS HE HOPED FOR A MORE REPAID SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM. IN ANY EVENT, SUCH REQUESTS BY A SOVERIGN STATE WERE LEGAL.
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